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MOGILLIARD, KATHLEEN LYNETTE (COFFIN). "Be As God?". A video-tape film of the dance is available at the Walter Clinton Jackson Library, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. (1972) Directed by Dr. Lois Andreasen.

The purpose of the choreographic work entitled "Be As God?" was to creatively develop a communicative theater piece by the process of artistically uniting dance and the written word. It was hypothesized that the union of dance with the written word could be a worthwhile process used to heighten the aesthetic response of an audience to an artistically developed idea.

The narrative poem "Adam and Eve" written by Karl Shapiro was selected to function as the written word. After a careful analysis of the poetry to determine the author's verbal intent, eleven individuals were chosen as the company of dancers to perform in "Be As God?". The choreographic process was begun with the intention of expressing the underlying nonverbal feelings, attitudes and relationships suggested by the poetry although rejecting the more realistic mimetic quality.

The present choreographer found that the combination of movement and written words is a valuable means of artistic expression. Although "Be As God?" as a dance is an independent work of art in itself, the use of Karl Shapiro's poem enhances the full meaning of the total theater piece. Dance could never replace verbal expression, however, it offers intensity in areas where the written word does not totally suffice.

" Be As God? "

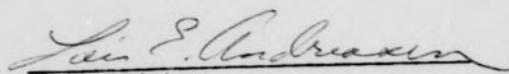
by

Kathleen Lynette (Coffin) McGilliard

A Thesis Submitted to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School at  
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Fine Arts

Greensboro  
June 1972

Approved by

  
Thesis Adviser

APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis has been approved by the following committee of the  
Faculty of the Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at  
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4/10/72

Date of Examination

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to express the most sincere appreciation to Dr. Lois Andreasen for her sensitive guidance and genuine concern throughout the development of this thesis.

A special thank you must also be given to the following dancers who by giving so unselfishly of themselves made "Be As God?" possible: Kathy Acton, Kathy Barger, Marie Bediz, Franklin Holder, Paula Hilton, Brenda Howald, Debbie Lechner, Margaret Marsden, Trudy Martin and Debbie Smith.

The writer also wishes to thank Barry Schwartz for his fine job of narrating "Be As God?".

And finally the deepest thanks to George McGilliard whose belief in the integrity of the arts as communication provides a continual inspiration.

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## COSTUMES

Eve



Eve will be costumed in a sleeveless leotard and footless tights (Danskin Numbers 295 and 585 respectively) White to be dyed Nude.

Adam



Adam will be costumed in a sleeveless leotard and footless tights (Danskin Numbers 295 and 570 respectively) White to be dyed Nude.

Snake



The Snake will be costumed in a turtle neck leotard and footless tights (Danskin Numbers 93 and 570 respectively) in White to be dyed dark Orange and then muted with Brown acrylics. A skull cap of the same colors will be worn upon the head.

Guardian of the Gate

The Guardian of the Gate will be costumed in a turtle neck leotard and footless tights (Danskin Numbers 93 and 585 respectively) in the color of White. A skull cap of White will be worn upon the head. Wings of Antron will be constructed to be worn attached at the wrist, elbow, back of neck, waist and ankle.





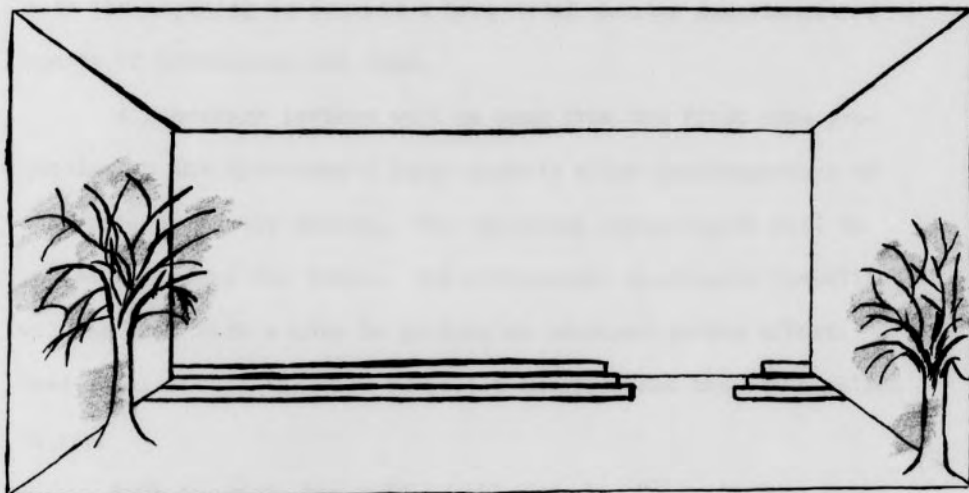
### The Witnesses



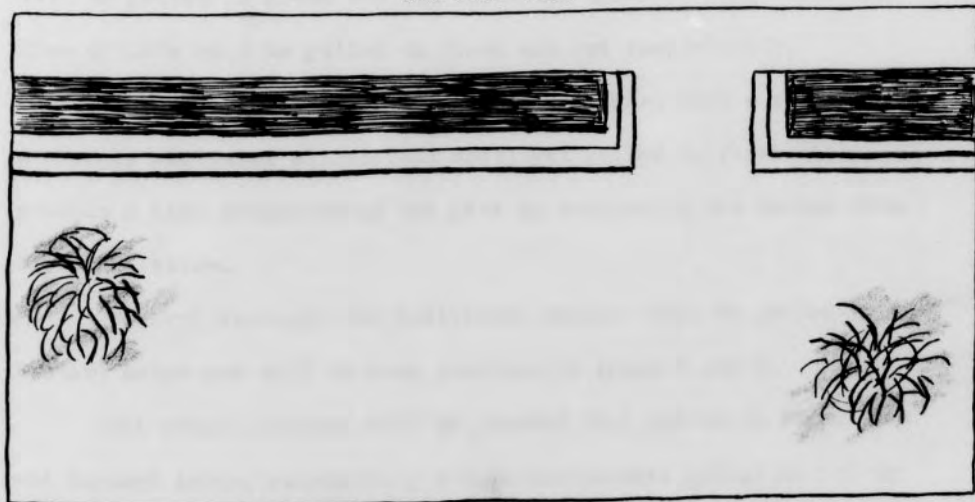
The Witnesses will be costumed in sleeveless leotards and footless tights (Danskin Numbers 295 and 585 respectively) in White to be dyed Nude. From a yoke piece around their necks will drape Felt leaves in shades of green and yellow to resemble vines. Some of the vines will be wrapped around the body and secured there.

## STAGE DESIGN

Front View



Overhead View



## CURTAIN AND LIGHTING PLOT

The choice of lighting was made by the writer to intensify the aesthetic response by means of uniting the poetry and movement with the lighting to provide a more total theater experience. A number of procedures are used.

A Linnebach lantern will be hung from the first pipe projecting on the cyclorama a large acetate slide representation of the world below the Garden. The cyclorama strip-lights will be gelled in greens and blues. Two ellipsoidal spotlights (Lekolite) will be used with a gobo to produce an overhead garden effect. Used successively one will be gelled in green and the other gelled in red.

Both trees in the Garden will have two Fresnels hung overhead as specials. The specials hung above the Tree of Knowledge will be gelled in green and red while the specials hung above the Tree of Life will be gelled in flesh and red respectively.

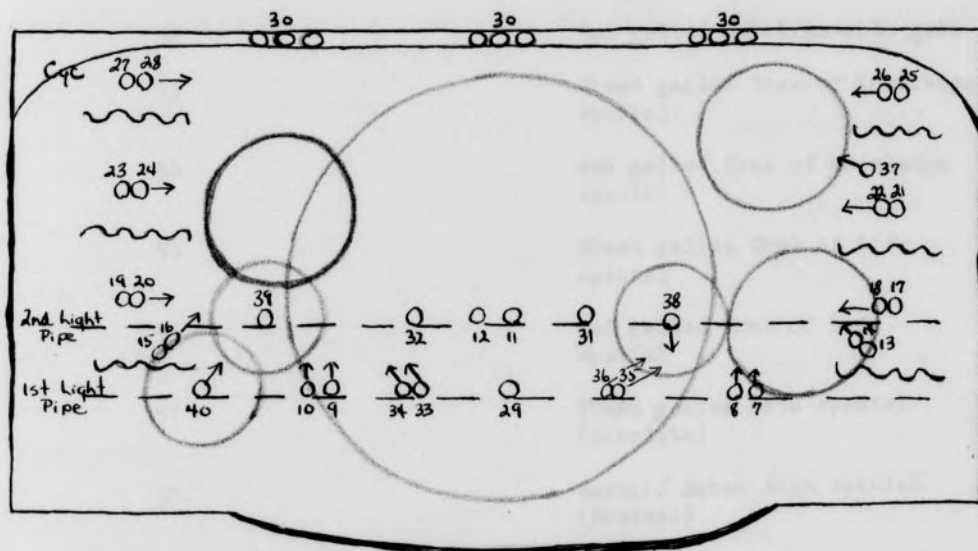
The gate, area 4, of the Garden will also have a special. A sharply shuttered ellipsoidal spotlight gelled in flesh will provide a line establishing the gate by separating the Garden from the world below.

Fresnel specials for individual dancers will be gelled in Bastard Amber and will be hung overhead in areas 1 and 3.

All other lighting will be general fill gelled in Steel Blue and Bastard Amber, maintaining enough instruments gelled in red to

to change the garden to autumn with the conclusion of the dance. The placement of these lights will be one to attain the plasticity and form of the dancer's body. Side lighting will be used in addition to lighting from the beams and pipes.

## Lighting Plot



Beam or Rail — — — — —  $\begin{matrix} \uparrow \uparrow \\ 6 \ 5 \end{matrix}$  — — — — —  $\begin{matrix} \uparrow \uparrow \\ 4 \ 3 \end{matrix}$  — — — — —  $\begin{matrix} \uparrow \uparrow \\ 2 \ 1 \end{matrix}$  — — — — —

## Key to Lighting Plot

<u>Light Number</u>	<u>Function</u>
1-28	General Lighting (Odd numbered instruments gelled in blue; even instruments gelled in red)
29	Linnebach lantern
30	Cyclorama strip-lights
31	Green gelled Lekolite with gobo
32	Red gelled Lekolite with gobo
33	Green gelled Tree of Knowledge special
34	Red gelled Tree of Knowledge special
35	Flesh gelled Tree of Life special
36	Red gelled Tree of Life special
37	Flesh gelled Gate special (Lekolite)
38	Bastard Amber Adam special (Fresnel)
39	Bastard Amber Witness special (Fresnel)
40	Bastard Amber Witness special (Fresnel)

## Lighting Cue Sheet

<u>Cue</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Lighting</u>
Preset/ Curtain open	30	Blue cyclorama lights up
Cue 1/ Angel's entrance	50	Fade in general lighting/ 50 count
Cue 2/ Adam's creation	100	Fade in Adam special in Area 1/ 5 count
Cue 3/ Witnesses created	100	Fade in special in Area 3/ 5 count
Cue 4/ Angel's gesture at gate	60	Fade in general lighting
	100	Specials on trees
	100	Gate special in Area 4
	100	Gobo
		All in 5 count
Cue 5/ Adam begins moving from position	Out	Adam Special/ 15 count
Cue 6/ Witnesses move from position	Out	Witness special/ 15 count
Cue 7/ "Far off, the latent streams began to flow"	100	Linnebach slide fade in/ 10 count
Cue 8/ Eve's creation	100	Fade in Eve special in Area 4/ 5 count
Cue 9/ Eve first walks	Out	Eve special/ 15 count
Cue 10/ "She was already turning beautiful"	Full	General lighting/ 20 count

Cue 11/ "They jumped up from the fourth caress and hid"	70	Fade general lighting/ 15 count
Cue 12/ "Why on her way to the oracle of Love.."	50-100	Tree specials pulsing/ ending on Snake's exit
Cue 13/ "Fell on her face to slake his terrible thirst"	50	General lighting fade with Adam's fall
Cue 14/ "Whiter than tombs, whiter than whitest clay..."	100	General lighting fade in/ 15 count
Cue 15/ Angel moves from gate	Out	Gate special/ 3 count
Cue 16/ "And when the two had gone a slow half dozen steps..."	Out 100 100 100 100	Slow fade General lighting (Blues only) General lighting (Reds) Adam special Eve special Witness special Red gobo
Cue 17/ "And the present world"	Out	All lights except Linnebach and cyclorama/ 10 count
Cue 18/ Immediately after Cue 17	Out	Fade Linnebach and cyclorama/ 3 count



## PHOTOGRAPHIC DATA

Distance of camera to stage : Forty-seven feet

Lighting : Regular studio lighting with additional studio stage lights  
and 1:00 P.M. bright daylight entering through the windows

Camera Make and Number : Sony Video Camera CVC 2000

Lens : Concord Television Zoom Lens 20-55m., 1: 2.8 with aperture  
set to the Full Position

Process : Stationary placement of camera supported on a tripod

Tape Size : Sony Video Tape V-31, 380m., 1240 feet long,  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch wide

Videocorder (deck) Make and Number : Sony Videocorder CV 2000

Sound Process : Microphone set at Full volume placed on the stage  
down stage right to pick up narration as well as vocalization

Copy Process : Recopy

THE END

THE END

APPENDIX

There were many who had seen the man who had been seen in the city of New York. He was a man of about thirty years of age, of medium height, with dark hair and eyes, and a fair complexion. He was dressed in a dark suit and a white shirt with a dark tie. He was seen in the city of New York, in the month of January, in the year 1900.

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## ADAM AND EVE

by

Karl Shapiro<sup>1</sup>

## The Sickness of Adam

In the beginning, at every step, he turned  
 As if by instinct to the East to praise  
 The nature of things. Now every path was learned  
 He lost the lifted, almost flower-like gaze

Of a temple dancer. He began to walk  
 Slowly, like one accustomed to be alone.  
 He found himself lost in the field of talk;  
 Thinking became a garden of its own.

In it were new things: words he had never said,  
 Beasts he had never seen and knew were not  
 In the true garden, terrors, and tears shed  
 Under a tree by him, for some new thought.

And the first anger. Once he flung a staff  
 At softly coupling sheep and struck the ram.  
 It broke away. And God heard Adam laugh  
 And for his laughter made the creature lame.

And wanderlust. He stood upon the Wall  
 To search the unfinished countries lying wide  
 And waste, where not a living thing could crawl,  
 And yet he would descend, as if to hide.

His thought drew down the guardian at the gate,  
 To whom man said, 'What danger am I in?'  
 And the angel, hurt in spirit, seemed to hate  
 The wingless thing that worried after sin,

---

<sup>1</sup>Karl Shapiro, Poems 1940-1953 (New York: Random House, 1953), pp. 3-12.

For it said nothing but marvelously unfurled  
Its wings and arched them shimmering overhead,  
Which must have been the signal from the world  
That the first season of our life was dead.

Adam fell down with labor in his bones  
And God approached him in the cool of day  
And said, 'This sickness in your skeleton  
Is longing. I will remove it from your clay.'

He said also, 'I made you strike the sheep.'  
It began to rain and God sat down beside  
The sinking man. When he was fast asleep  
He wet his right hand deep in Adam's side

And drew the graceful rib out of his breast.  
Far off, the latent streams began to flow  
And birds flew out of Paradise to nest  
On earth. Sadly the angel watched them go.

## The Recognition of Eve

Whatever it was she had so fiercely fought  
Had fled back to the sky, but still she lay  
With arms outspread, awaiting its assault,  
Staring up through the branches of the tree,  
The fig tree. Then she drew a shuddering breath  
And turned her head instinctively his way.  
She had fought birth as dying men fight death.

Her sigh awakened him. He turned and saw  
A body swollen, as though formed of fruits,  
White as the flesh of fishes, soft and raw.  
He hoped she was another of the brutes  
So he crawled over and looked into her eyes,  
The human wells that pool all absolutes.  
It was like looking into double skies.

And when she spoke the first word (it was thou)  
He was terror-stricken, but she raised her hand  
And touched his wound where it was fading now,  
For he must feel the place to understand.  
Then he recalled the longing that had torn  
His side, and while he watched it whitely mend,  
He felt it stab him suddenly like a thorn.

He thought the woman had hurt him. Was it she  
Or the same sickness seeking to return;  
Or was there any difference, the pain set free  
And she who seized him now as hard as iron?  
Her fingers bit his body. She looked old  
And involuted, like the newly-born.  
He let her hurt him till she loosed her hold.

Then she forgot him and she wearily stood  
And went in search of water through the grove.  
Adam could see her wandering through the wood,  
Studying her footsteps as her body wove  
In light and out of light. She found a pool  
And there he followed shyly to observe.  
She was already turning beautiful.

## The Kiss

The first kiss was with stumbling fingertips.  
 Their bodies grazed each other as if by chance  
 And touched and untouched in a kind of dance.  
 Second, they found out touching with their lips.

Some obscure angel, pausing on his course,  
 Shed such a brightness on the face of Eve  
 That Adam in grief was ready to believe  
 He had lost her love. The third kiss was by force.

Their lips formed foreign, unimagined oaths  
 When speaking of the Tree of Guilt. So wide  
 Their mouths, they drank each other from inside.  
 A gland of honey burst within their throats.

But something rustling hideously overhead,  
 They jumped up from the fourth caress and hid.

## The Tree of Guilt

Why on her way to the oracle of Love,  
 Did she not even glance up at the Tree  
 Of Life, that giant with the whitish cast  
 And glinting leaves and berries of dull gray,  
 As though covered with mold? But who would taste  
 The medicine of immortality,  
 And who would 'be as God'? And in what way?

So she came breathless to the lowlier one  
 And like a priestess of the cult she knelt,  
 Holding her breasts in token for a sign,  
 And prayed the spirit of the burdened bough  
 That the great power of the tree be seen  
 And lift itself out of the Tree of Guilt  
 Where it had hidden in the leaves till now.

Or did she know already? Had the peacock  
 Rattling its quills, glancing its thousand eyes  
 At her, the iridescence of the dove,  
 Stench of the he-goat, everything that joins  
 Told her the mystery? It was not enough,  
 So from the tree the snake began to rise  
 And dropt its head and pointed at her loins.

She fell and hid her face and still she saw  
 The spirit of the tree emerge and slip  
 Into the open sky until it stood  
 Straight as a standing-stone, and spilled its seed.  
 And all the seed were serpents of the good.  
 And again he seized the snake and from its lip  
 It spat the venomous evil of the deed.

And it was over. But the woman lay  
 Stricken with what she knew, ripe in her thought  
 Like a fresh apple fallen from the limb  
 And rotten, like a fruit that lies too long.  
 This way she rose, ripe-rotten in her prime  
 And spurned the cold thing coiled against her foot  
 And called her husband, in a kind of song.

## The Confession

As on the first day her first word was thou.  
He waited while she said, 'Thou art the tree.'  
And while she said, almost accusingly,  
Looking at nothing, 'Thou art the fruit I took.'  
She seemed smaller by inches as she spoke,  
And Adam wondering touched her hair and shook,  
Half understanding. He answered softly, 'How?'

For the third time, in the third way, Eve:  
'The tree that rises from the middle part of  
The garden.' And almost tenderly, 'Thou art  
The garden. We.' Then she was overcome,  
And Adam cold, lest he should succumb  
To pity, standing at the edge of doom,  
Comforted her like one about to leave.

She sensed departure and she stood aside  
Smiling and bitter. But he asked again,  
'How did you eat? With what thing did you sin?'  
And Eve with body slackened and uncouth,  
'Under the tree I took the fruit of truth  
From an angel. I ate it with my other mouth.'  
And saying so, she did not know she lied.

It was the man who suddenly released  
From doubt, wept in the woman's heavy arms,  
Those double serpents, subtly winding forms  
That climb and drop about the manly boughs;  
And dry with weeping, fiery and aroused,  
Fell on her face to slake his terrible thirst  
And bore her body earthward like a beast.



## Shame

The hard blood falls back in the manly fount,  
The soft door closes under Venus' mount,  
The ovoid moon moves to the Garden's side  
And dawn comes, but the lovers have not died.  
They have not died but they have fallen apart  
In sleep, like equal halves of the same heart.

How to teach shame? How to teach nakedness  
To the already Naked? How to express  
Nudity? How to open innocent eyes  
And separate the innocent from the wise?  
And how to re-establish the guilty tree  
In infinite gardens of humanity?

By marring the image, by the black device  
Of the goat-god, by the clown of Paradise,  
By fruits of cloth and by the navel's bud,  
By itching tendrils and by strings of blood,  
By ugliness, by the shadow of our fear,  
By ridicule, by the fig-leaf patch of hair.

Whiter than tombs, whiter than whitest clay,  
Exposed beneath the whitening eye of day,  
They awoke and saw the covering that reveals.  
They thought they were changing into animals.  
Like animals they bellowed terrible cries  
And clutched each other, hiding each other's eyes.

## Exile

The one who gave the warning with his wings,  
Still doubting them, held out the sword of flame  
Against the Tree of Whiteness as they came  
Angrily, slowly by, like exiled kings.

And watched them at the broken-open gate  
Stare in the distance long and overlong,  
And then, like peasants, pitiful and strong,  
Take the first step toward earth and hesitate.

For Adam raised his head and called aloud,  
'My Father, who has made the garden pall,  
Giving me all things and then taking all,  
Who with your opposite nature has endowed

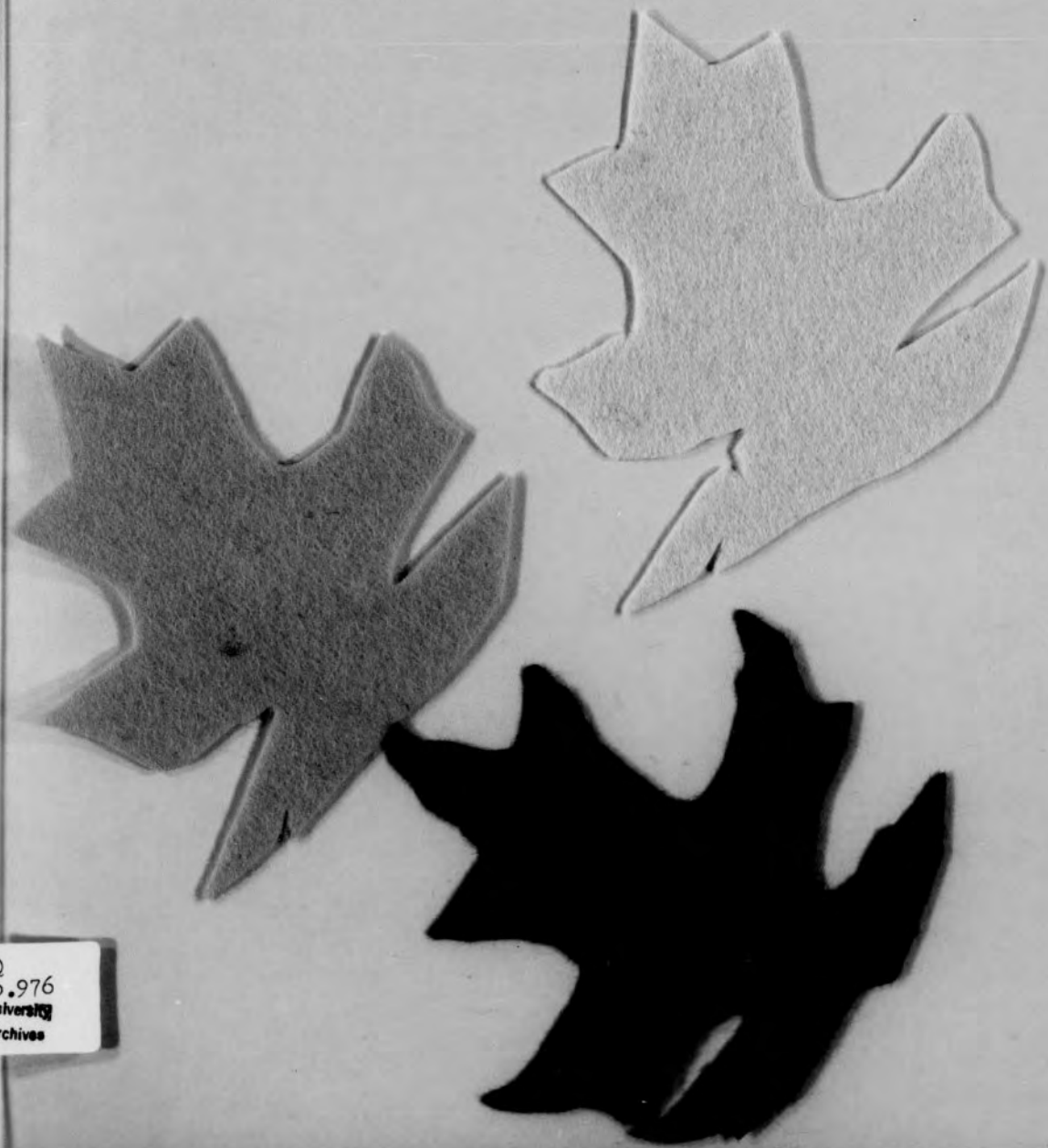
Woman, give us your hand for our descent.  
Needing us greatly, even in our disgrace,  
Guide us, for gladly do we leave this place  
For our own land and wished-for banishment.'

But woman prayed, 'Guide us to Paradise.'  
Around them slunk the uneasy animals,  
Strangely excited, uttering coughs and growls,  
And bounded down into the wild abyss.

And overhead the last migrating birds,  
Then empty sky. And when the two had gone  
A slow half-dozen steps across the stone,  
The angel came and stood among the shards

And called them, as though joyously, by name.  
They turned in dark amazement and beheld  
Eden ablaze with fires of red and gold,  
The garden dressed for dying in cold flame,

And it was autumn, and the present world.



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